ANNA SEWARD

Engraved by A. Cardon from the original picture painted in 1762
by Kettle in the possession of Thomas White Esq.r Lichfield.

Edinburgh. Published by Mgs.rs Constable & Co.rs March 1811

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ODE

ON

GENERAL ELIOTT'S RETURN FROM GIBRALTAR.

By ANNA SEWARD.

" Sighing I feel, as I approach the Lyre,
" My talents ſink beneath my proud deſire."

HAYLEY'S ESSAY ON EPIC POETRY,
Ep. iv. ver. 413.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.
MDCCLXXXVII.

[Price One Shilling.]

BRITISH MUSEUM

O D E

ON

GENERAL ELIOTT's

RETURN FROM GIBRALTAR.

WITH grateful welcome, with triumphant praiſe,
Thy honour'd Chief, O reſcued Britain, meet!
Whoſe dauntleſs proweſs, in reſplendent rays,
Shone on the darkneſs of thy long defeat;
Gave thee, on thy ſilvery Shores,
While Peace the civic crown reſtores,
Beneath her train of joys again to ſhine,
As Loſs had ne'er chaſtis'd, Oppreſſion ne'er been thine.

Think, Britannia, think how late,
Around thy pale unſhelter'd head,
To blaſt thy gloomy pride, avenging Fate
Unequal War's diſaſtrous terrors ſpread;
While thy torn trophies, drench'd in blood,
She ſcatter'd o'er the Weſtern Flood,
That the Provincial Standard high ſhe rais'd,
By Gallia's lilies deck'd, by Spain's proud creſt emblaz'd;
That thy vain Foes, elated to behold
The long INVINCIBLE at laſt ſubdu'd;
Their tide of Conqueſt to that Fortreſs roll'd,
By ſullen Spain with dread and envy view'd.
See! in united ſtrength and pride,
At Calpe's baſe their Navies ride,
Hurl up its ſteeps the thunders of their Power,
That burſt the ſocial Roof, and rend the Warrior Tower!

Creſt-

Creſt-fall'n Britain, where were then
The rumours of thy matchleſs might?
And where had been the Empreſs of the Main
Had Skill and Valour riſen a *common* height?
No common height thoſe Bulwarks roſe,
When ELIOTT lighten'd on thy Foes,
Wing'd his red bolts, that wrapp'd their Fleets in flame,
Reſiſtleſs as his ſword, and glowing as his fame!

Mark the invading Hoſt, elate no more!
Recoiling pauſe between a choice ſo dire!
Alike they hear the Britiſh Lion roar
In the o'erwhelming Flood, and raging Fire!
Groaning they plunge!—in wild deſpair,
With raiment ſcorch'd, and blazing hair!
The billows, cloſing o'er their ſtruggling Frames,
Are purpled by the gore, illumin'd by the flames!

Warm in Virtue's native glow,
Heroic ELIOTT's great Ally,
His valiant CURTIS, bending o'er the Prow,
With all the * twice-bleſs'd Angel in his eye,
Commands to puſh his conquering oars,
Where moſt the fiery Torrent pours;
The Victims from their inſtant fate to ſave,
And ſnatch them back to Life, from the devouring Wave.

O Britain!—O my Country! *then* 'twas thine
To emerge from ev'ry Cloud that veil'd thy light!
In all the ſplendor of that worth to ſhine,
Which erſt, with ray peculiar, deck'd thy Might;
What time, amidſt thy vanquiſh'd Foes,
Thy name with added luſtre roſe,
For that thy Precepts to thy Sons impart,
With the undaunted Soul, the generous melting Heart.

* Shakeſpeare beautifully ſays of Mercy:

" ———it is twice bleſs'd,
" It bleſſes him that gives, and him that takes."

High

High thy martial influence ſoar'd,
On Belgian Plains when Gallic gore,
In Freedom's cauſe, intrepid Marlborough pour'd;
And white for England, the eventful Hour,
Beneath the * royal William's ſword,
When gaunt Rebellion grimly cower'd,
When, of her ſcorpion ſtings diſarm'd, ſhe fled,
In Scotia's deſert Caves to hide her recreant head.

Nor ſacred leſs the youthful Warrior's fame,
Dear-bought Quebec! upon thy plains beheld,
Who fall'n and bleeding—at the loud acclaim
That hail'd Britannia Miſtreſs of the Field;
That bade her crimſon Standard riſe
Victorious in the echoing Skies,
Lifts the pale eye, a gleam of tranſport fires,
And, ſmiling on his wounds, triumphantly expires!

* Duke of Cumberland.

Palms unfading round their urn
Let their favour'd Country ſtrew!
Since to the laviſh wreaths ſhe long had worn,
They brought new laurels of enduring glow;
To ELIOTT *more* indebted, raiſe
In higher tone, the notes of praiſe,
Who hid, in Glory's blaze, her livid ſtain,
Impreſs'd by raſh attempts, irreſolute and vain.

So when the wintry Tempeſt's baleful Powers
Have riſen a vernal Day-ſpring to deform,
If the all-cheering Sun, at Evening hours,
Throws back the ſable curtains of the Storm,
Green Hills, and gilded Mountains gay,
In dewy brightneſs meet his ray;
Creation kindles, as its luſtre flows,
Till, in a ſoften'd night, he leaves her to repoſe.

Fruitful

Fruitful as th' enſuing Morn,
When ſmiling May with Zephyr ſports,
The graceful Arts Britannia's Dome adorn,
And floats her Commerce to the diſtant Ports.
To thee, brave ELIOTT! well ſhe knows
Their mild proſperity ſhe owes;
Since awful Honour muſt his beams unveil,
Ere full the Arts can bloom, or Commerce widely ſail.

A meaner Mind, ſuch ſignal conqueſt gain'd,
Had ruſh'd to meet its Country's Pæans warm;
But ELIOTT, calm, thro' circling years, remain'd
Beneath the ROCK, defended by his arm;
Her ſhatter'd Ramparts to reſtore,
And firm thro' Ages bid them tower;
That from her brow the Britiſh Flag may ſtream,
To proud Iberia's gales in majeſty ſupreme.

Not the trophies, not the ſtrains
Of tranſport, on his Albion's ſhore,
When ELIOTT's deeds rung thro' her vaulted Fanes,
Th' acknowledg'd Bulwarks of her falling Power,
Cou'd lure, with all that Joy prepares,
The Hero from his guardian cares;
No praiſe, no meed, no trophy he deſir'd,
Save that which conſcious worth, in all its glow, inſpir'd.

His toils accompliſh'd, to his native Clime,
In unaſſuming greatneſs, lo! he comes!—
And can it be, that the elapſe of Time
The ſacred ſenſe of Gratitude conſumes?
No, Britain, no!—thy raptur'd gaze,
Thy faireſt meed, thy warmeſt lays,
Shall chaſe the doubt, and ſhame th' injurious fear,
In thy reſounding Ports when ELIOTT's ſails appear!

May the bleſſings that await
Honour on the lap of Peace,
Illuſtrious Soldier! mark thy future fate,
Bloom like thy virtues, with thy years increaſe!
Long may'ſt thou, benignly, ſee
Britannia, generous, brave, and free,
Wide o'er the world, as in her laurel'd prime,
Dart the commanding glance, and lift the brow ſublime!

FINIS.

23 JY 68